

**Testimony of Congressman Eric Cantor**  
**Before the Subcommittee on Domestic Monetary**  
**Policy, Technology, and Economic Growth**

**July 24, 2001**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this hearing today, and I am pleased to be here to discuss H.R. 1021, the Liberty Bill Act of 2001.

Many studies have demonstrated that most Americans have little knowledge about the Constitution of the United States. While we all enjoy the benefits of our democracy, fewer and fewer citizens of this great country can cite the basic rights to freedom guaranteed in this timeless document.

To remedy this unfortunate trend, a remarkable group of students at Liberty Middle School in Ashland, Virginia have proposed a way to give Americans a daily civics lesson. On their behalf, I introduced the Liberty Bill Act of 2001. This legislation is intended to celebrate our Constitution as a living American symbol and integrate it into our lives on a daily basis by simply placing an abbreviated version of the Constitution on the reverse side of all U.S. currency.

This bill would honor our system of law and government and promote the teaching of democratic principles around the world. We as a nation must be ever mindful of the ideals upon which the United States was founded, and this legislation would provide a prominent reminder of our

founding father's vision for our nation.

My distinguished predecessor, Congressman Tom Bliley, recognized the value of this concept and garnered over a hundred co-sponsors of a similar bill during the 106<sup>th</sup> Congress, many who sit on this Committee. This bipartisan bill was introduced in the 107<sup>th</sup> Congress with the co-sponsorship of the entire Virginia Delegation and support for the concept is growing here in the House. I also welcome the Distinguished Senator from Virginia, Senator George Allen, who is the author of similar legislation in the Senate.

I would also like to applaud Mr. Randy Wright whose vision and leadership on this issue brought this concept to reality. Randy has been an energetic proponent of the Liberty Bill and his hard work on this legislation has enabled his students to present their idea here in the House of Representatives as well as at the White House. Randy has a true understanding of our democracy and I commend him for his love of teaching. He is a model citizen, an enthusiastic teacher, and an excellent example for his profession.

You will see from the presentation to follow that his students have excelled in their studies and promise a bright future for the United States of America. They have traveled here today from Richmond, Virginia to participate in our democratic process and present their idea to the Subcommittee. I am honored to represent such fine young men and women and am impressed by their patriotism and inspired by their potential.

As the Representative from the seat once held by James Madison, I am particularly cognizant of

the contributions of our ancestors at the birth of our nation. George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and George Mason are not just names in a history book to these students from Liberty Middle School; they are shining examples of our democracy, and their memory embodies our heritage in Virginia and the United States. Men and Woman in this country and around the world are indebted to these patriotic Americans. We cherish their memory and through this legislation we work to preserve their accomplishments.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.